

# Childhood Lead Poisoning



Tennessee Department  
of Health

*Adapted for Tennessee by Martha Keel, Professor  
and Janice McCoy, former Research Associate,  
Family and Consumer Sciences*

**UF Extension**  
SP605

## What is lead poisoning?

Lead poisoning is a disease that can cause serious health problems, such as brain and kidney damage, coma and even death. Even low blood lead levels can lead to learning problems and hyperactivity. You should be concerned if your child tests at even a low level; any level of lead in the blood is a concern.

Signs of lead poisoning may not be present or may be thought of as the flu. However, some symptoms could include:

- Stomachache and/or cramps
- Low energy
- Headache and irritability
- Poor appetite

## Who is at risk?

Children from birth to 6 years are at a high risk for lead poisoning because they absorb a much higher amount of lead. Their growing bodies are more likely to be damaged by lead. Pregnant women, people living in poverty and/or living in housing built before 1978 are also at high risk.



## **Tennessee Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (TN CLPPP)**

The TN CLPPP is a collaboration headed by the Tennessee Department of Health. The goal is to protect Tennessee's children from lead poisoning and to promote among all populations the knowledge and skills needed to prevent lead poisoning.

### **Program Goals:**

- Monitor blood levels in children younger than 6 years of age
- Test children at 12 and 24 months
- Increase number of children screened

- Follow up on children with high levels of lead in the blood
- Increase public awareness of the dangers of lead

### **Program Partners**

- Tennessee Department of Health
- University of Tennessee Extension
- Shelby, Hamilton, and Sullivan County Health Departments
- Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
- Middle Tennessee State University

Visit <http://fcs.tennessee.edu/lead> for more information.



THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE **UT**  
INSTITUTE of AGRICULTURE

SP605-2.5M-03/10(Rev) R12-5310-155-046-10 10-0152

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.